



Rural Maryland Day Advocates with Delegate Regina Boyce

## In This Issue...

### Greetings!

The Maryland General Assembly adjourned Sine Die on March 18, 2020 after final passage of the Fiscal Year 2021 Operating Budget, the Blueprint for Maryland's Future and several bills related to revenue enhancements. The Rural Maryland Council and the grant programs, the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund and the Maryland Agricultural Education and the Rural Development Assistance Fund, are fully funded and will receive \$6,327,575 in Fiscal Year 2021. Look for information on those programs in the future! We thank Governor Larry Hogan and our new presiding officers, Senate President Bill Ferguson and House Speaker Adrienne Jones for their support.

During our Annual Meeting held on December 11, 2019 at the Doubletree Hilton Hotel in Annapolis, the Council recognized outstanding rural community and economic development projects and volunteers. We also recognized our Rural Champion, Delegate Sheree Sample-Hughes, and conveyed the Rural Legacy award to the College of Southern Maryland Foundation in honor of Maryland Senate President Emeritus, Thomas V. Mike Miller Jr. The Council

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elected new Board members as well as new officers. We thanked Scott Warner for his service as the outgoing RMC Chair.

We hosted another successful Rural Summit on December 12, 2019 in Annapolis. Lieutenant Governor Boyd Rutherford welcomed attendees. Our keynote speaker, Dr. Paul Costello, Executive Director of the Vermont Rural Development Council was inspiring and insightful.

Our Legislative Luncheon was held on January 31, 2020 in the Miller Senate Building in Annapolis. Maryland Senate President Bill Ferguson attended and addressed the group. Our 2020 [Legislative Priorities](#) were announced including: full funding of the Council, the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund, the Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industries Development Corporation (MARBIDO) and the Regional Councils and funding for the Local Government Infrastructure Fund for rural broadband.

The Council continues its operations although staff are currently teleworking. RMC is following Governor Hogan's order and the State's [Pandemic Flu and Infectious Diseases Attendance and Leave Policy](#). Look for more information in the future, as currently all state government meetings with over 10 attendees are cancelled until April 15, 2020 including the RMC's April 3, 2020 Quarterly Executive Board meeting.

We look forward to Fiscal Year 2021 and to further serving our rural communities!

Sincerely,

John Hartline  
Chair

Message from the Executive Director

## Events

[RMC Legislative Committee Meeting](#)  
2:00 pm - 3:00 pm  
March 23, 2020

[RMC Grant Review Board Meeting](#)  
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm  
March 26, 2020

[RMC Strategic Planning Meeting](#)  
9:00 am - 3:00 pm  
March 27, 2020

[RMC Executive Board Meeting- Canceled](#)  
12:00 pm - 2:00 pm  
April 3, 2020

[Rural Maryland Foundation Meeting](#)  
10:00 am - 12:00 pm  
June 4, 2020

## RMC In The News

[2020 Rural Maryland Council Legislative Session Position Statements](#)  
March 20, 2020

[Keeping up with Maryland's Agricultural Legislative Agenda](#)  
March 18, 2020

[Future Harvest Focuses on Finding Farmland](#)  
December 13, 2019

[Evergreen Heritage Center honored by Rural Maryland Council](#)  
December 17, 2019

[Rural Maryland Council funds more than \\$6 Million in grants, Caps off a Year of Achievements to 2020](#)  
December 31, 2019



Pictured: Charlotte Davis (RMC Executive Director) presented with the State of Maryland Proclamation for Rural Maryland Day, alongside John Hartline (RMC Chair) and Ryan Snow (Office of Governor Larry Hogan) .

During the shortened General Assembly Session, the Legislative Committee met biweekly to review and discuss legislation. The Committee monitored almost 200 bills and submitted 28 position statements. We also hosted a Welcome Breakfast for legislators on January 17, 2020 as well as Rural Maryland Day on February 4, 2020.

Rural Maryland Day was held in partnership with the Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts and the Maryland Dairy Industry Association. Attendees met with legislators and staff in the House of Delegates and the Maryland Senate to discuss opportunities and initiatives in rural communities. We would like to thank everyone who attended to make this event a great success.

We want to welcome our new staff member, Megan D'Arcy, as Program Administrator. Megan comes to us from Eastern Shore Land Conservancy where she served as Stewardship Manager. Megan is excited to expand her scope of work serving the citizens across the state, she is energetic, enthusiastic and we are looking forward to working with her! Please feel free to contact her at [megan.darcy@maryland.gov](mailto:megan.darcy@maryland.gov) or (410) 841-2744 if you have any questions or comments.

Our FY2021 Grant process will start soon for both the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund and the Rural Maryland Prosperity Investment Fund. We anticipate opening the program to Phase One applications on Monday April 27, 2020. Look for

[Hogan proposes funding for agricultural, environmental programs in fiscal budget](#)

January 26, 2020

[Gillespie takes workforce job in Hancock](#)

February 18, 2020

## Rural Maryland Foundation



Rural Maryland Foundation

**The Rural Maryland Foundation will meet on Thursday, June 4, 2020 via conference call.** Learn more about the meeting [here](#).

A final version of the Aspire 2.0 short film will be available soon!

To learn more about the Rural Maryland Foundation, please visit the website at [ruralmdfoundation.org](http://ruralmdfoundation.org)

more details about the application process and dates for information sessions.

Thank you for all that you do for our rural communities! If the Council or I can ever be of any assistance, please contact me at [charlotte.davis@maryland.gov](mailto:charlotte.davis@maryland.gov) or (410) 841-5774.

Sincerely,



Charlotte Davis  
Executive Director

## Committee Updates



### **RMC Joint Planning and Development Committee**

The RMC Joint Planning and Development Committee will meet on Friday, March 27, 2020 to discuss future goals and plans for the RMC.

To learn more about the RMC Joint Planning and Development Committee, please contact the RMC at [rmc.mda@maryland.gov](mailto:rmc.mda@maryland.gov).



### **RMC Legislative Committee**

The RMC Legislative Committee will meet via conference call on Monday, Monday, March 23, 2020. Learn more about the meeting [here](#).

To learn more about the RMC Legislative Committee, please contact the RMC at [rmc.mda@maryland.gov](mailto:rmc.mda@maryland.gov).

## Community Links

Check out what's happening in rural Maryland...

## Training Opportunities & Conferences

- [Reversing the Downward Trends for Farmers Markets Workshop](#) - University of Maryland Extension - March 31, 2020
- [Mid-Atlantic Resource Center Telehealth Summit](#) - Mid-Atlantic Telehealth Resource Center - April 5-7, 2020

## Awards & Grants

- [ReConnect Loan and Grant Program](#) - United States Department of Agriculture - Applications due on March 31, 2020
- [Historic Preservation Capital Grants](#) - Maryland Historical Trust - Applications due on March 23, 2020
- [Young Farmer Grants](#) - National Young Farmers Coalition- Applications due on March 29, 2020
- [Distance Learning & Telemedicine Grant](#) - United States Department of Agriculture - Applications due on April 10, 2020

## Programs & More

- [Maryland Census 2020](#) - Maryland Department of Information Technology
- [Community Health Worker Certification](#) - Maryland Department of Health - Applications due on March 31, 2020
- [2020 Maryland Energy Storage Income Tax Credit Program](#) - Maryland Energy Administration- Applications due on January 15, 2021
- [Photo Contest](#) - Maryland Department of Natural Resources - Submissions due on August 31, 2020
- [Rural Matters Podcast](#) - National Rural Education Association

### Got a link to share? Send it to us!

Email: [rmc.mda@maryland.gov](mailto:rmc.mda@maryland.gov) to share links to your events and programs.

Rural Maryland Council Office Closed- Staff Teleworking



On March 12, 2020 Governor Larry Hogan declared that all non-essential state employees should begin mandatory telework on Friday, March 13, 2020 in response to the COVID-19 virus. All previously scheduled events and travel have been canceled. Normal work meetings will be held virtually. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause and we will continue working to serve our rural Marylanders.

Click [here](#) to view our list of staff members and contact information. For health resources regarding COVID-19, including case counts and clinician guidance, Marylanders should visit [health.maryland.gov/coronavirus](https://health.maryland.gov/coronavirus).

As the State of Maryland continues its unprecedented response to COVID-19, Secretary Joe Bartenfelder from the Maryland Department of Agriculture is emphasizing the need for businesses involved in the state's food supply chain to continue production.

Reliable access to food is a human right and it is critical that our food supply chain maintain - and even be prepared to expand - operations throughout this state of emergency. Any business involved in food distribution, production, processing, sales and supply will be considered essential, including, but not limited to:

- Agricultural equipment sales and service
- Agricultural supply businesses
- Animal feed supply and distribution
- Farms
- Farmers markets and food banks
- Feed mills
- Food and meat processors and manufacturers, including bakeries, etc.
- Food safety laboratories and inspectors
- Greenhouses and nurseries
- Grocery delivery services
- Pet food manufacturers and distributors
- Retailers, including grocery stores
- Seafood industry (crabbers, watermen, processors, etc.)
- Transportation, distribution and suppliers
- Veterinary services and supplies

On behalf of the Hogan-Rutherford administration, we appreciate your support and patience as we continue to navigate this constantly-evolving situation with as few disruptions to food production and processing. Thank you for all that you do to ensure Marylanders continue to have access to a safe, reliable food source. We will post any updates on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and the [MDA website](#). If you have specific questions, please contact [news.mda@maryland.gov](mailto:news.mda@maryland.gov).

As a companion piece to the earlier released Medicare Telehealth Guidance, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid services today released Medicaid Telehealth Guidance to states. You can find a copy of the guidance [here: https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/benefits/downloads/medicaid-telehealth-services.pdf](https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/benefits/downloads/medicaid-telehealth-services.pdf). Additionally, you can find the homepage for general Medicaid Telehealth Guidance [here: https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/benefits/telemedicine/index.html](https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/benefits/telemedicine/index.html).

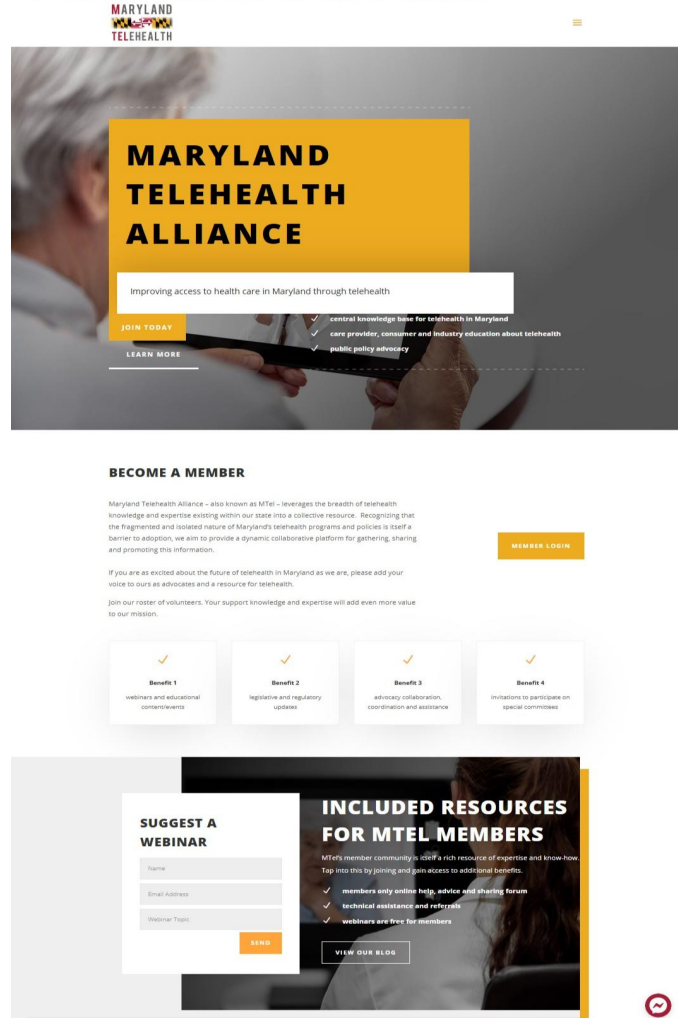
**MAERDAF Spotlight - \$20,000 MAERDAF grant funds new Maryland Telehealth Alliance website and outreach efforts**

A \$20,000 grant from the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) has provided the [Maryland Telehealth Alliance](#) with a new website with resources to engage and educate. The MAERDAF grant is supporting a variety of outreach projects to educate stakeholders - consumers, health care providers and payers about how telemedicine works and how it can enhance health care outcomes. Specifically, the grant funded:

- The design of a new multi-functional website that will provide information to the general public and special features for Maryland Telehealth members.
- The technology to host a series of webinars (both live and recorded).
- Costs to attend some outreach events.

The grant was one of 42 Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) grants totaling

\$1,093,930, which were distributed to 39 organizations in Fiscal Year 2019.



*Pictured: A screenshot of the new Maryland Telehealth Alliance website, which was funded by the recent grant from the Maryland Agricultural Education and Rural Development Assistance Fund (MAERDAF) , which the Rural Maryland Council (RMC ) administers.*

## Special Feature - 2019 RMC Annual Meeting and Rural Summit



*Pictured: Charlotte Davis (RMC Executive Director) and Matthew*

*Teffaeu (RMC Vice Chair) presenting Mr. Bob Arnold (Arnold Farms) with the RMC Outstanding Rural Volunteer Award at the 2019 RMC Annual Meeting.*

**The Rural Maryland Council held its Annual Executive Board meeting on Wednesday, December 11, 2019 at the DoubleTree Hilton**

**Hotel in Annapolis, Maryland.** Highlights of the meeting included the election of new board members and an overview of the councils achievements for 2019. This year we had the special honor of presenting Senator Thomas V. Mike Miller with our Rural Legacy Award which recognizes him for his extraordinary efforts to support agriculture, infrastructure, and to vastly improve rural quality of life.

The Rural Impact Awards also recognized the following:

- Outstanding Rural Community Development - Evergreen Heritage Center and Sudlersville Laundromat
- Outstanding Rural Volunteer - Mr. Bob Arnold
- Outstanding Rural Economic Development - Cecil County Office of Economic Development
- Rural Champion - Delegate Sheree Sample-Hughes

For more information on our 2019 Rural Impact Awards, please visit our website [here](#).



Pictured: Lieutenant Governor Boyd Rutherford welcoming attendees at the 2019 Rural Summit held at the DoubleTree Hilton Hotel in Annapolis, Maryland.

**The Rural Maryland Council hosted its biennial Rural Summit "Rural Maryland Rising: Investing in Resiliency, Collaboration and Innovation" that successfully attracted nearly 300 rural residents, business owners, community leaders, and legislators from across the state on Thursday December 12, 2019 at the DoubleTree Hilton Hotel in Annapolis, Maryland.** The Summit included a welcome by Maryland Lieutenant Governor Boyd Rutherford, breakout sessions, a 2020 session preview with Maryland legislators, and a luncheon panel session with Maryland cabinet secretaries and department leadership. The Summit also included the AgShowcase19, featuring four agricultural innovators who presented a TED-styled talk about how they are changing the face of agriculture in Maryland (and around the country). View power points and photos from the Summit [here](#). We plan to host another successful summit in 2021.

Keynote speaker, Paul Costello, Ph.D., executive director of the Vermont Council on Rural Development, set the tone for the Summit. "In the face of our rural challenges, to build unity and momentum to get things done, we need to carry relentless optimism," says Dr. Costello. "Let's stop defining rural as a failure and as a deficit. Let's define it by its strengths and its critical importance to the future, and let's work together for a New Ruralism, a renewal and re-engagement with all the creative forces for good in rural communities," he adds. Dr. Costello's remarks could not have been more on point. Through events like the Summit, we can come together to share solutions so that real change can happen.

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Rural Maryland Council is an independent state agency and Maryland's federally designated State Rural Development Council under the United States Department of Agriculture's National Rural Development Partnership. Our mission is to bring together federal, state, county, and municipal government officials as well as representatives of the for-profit and nonprofit sectors to identify challenges unique to rural communities and to develop and implement policy solutions. As a collaborative partnership, the RMC operates under the guidance of a 40-member Executive Board, in a nonpartisan and non-discriminatory manner.

Rural Maryland Council | 410-841-5772 | [rmc.mda@maryland.gov](mailto:rmc.mda@maryland.gov) |  
<http://www.rural.maryland.gov/>  
50 Harry S. Truman Parkway  
Annapolis, MD 21401

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